

BEFORE THE PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION  
OF THE STATE OF HAWAII

In the Matter of the Application of )  
HAWAII ELECTRIC LIGHT COMPANY, INC. )  
For Approval to Construct an Overhead )  
69 kV Transmission Line Pursuant to )  
HRS § 269-27.6(a) for Item H0001047, )  
Waimea-Kawaihae Reconductor 7300 Line )

DOCKET NO. 2007-0124

INTERIM ORDER NO. 23544

Filed July 13, 2007

At 12 o'clock P.M.

Karen Higashi

Chief Clerk of the Commission

RECEIVED

2007 JUL 16 A 8:30

DIV. OF CONSUMER ADVOCACY  
DEPT. OF COMMERCE AND  
CONSUMER AFFAIRS  
STATE OF HAWAII

ATTEST: A True Copy  
KAREN HIGASHI  
Chief Clerk, Public Utilities  
Commission, State of Hawaii.

Karen Higashi

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HAWAII ELECTRIC LIGHT COMPANY, INC.	)	Docket No. 2007-0124
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Waimea-Kawaihae Reconductor 7300 Line	)	
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INTERIM ORDER

By this Interim Order, the commission approves HAWAII ELECTRIC LIGHT COMPANY, INC.'s ("HELCO") request for interim approval to permit HELCO to commit funds and, if necessary, to start installation in connection with the Waimea-Kawaihae Reconductor 7300 Line project, Item H0001047 Project("Project").

I.

Background

On May 11, 2007, HELCO filed an Application for commission approval to construct an overhead 69 kilovolt ("kV") transmission line, pursuant to Hawaii Revised Statutes ("HRS") § 269-27.6(a).<sup>1</sup> Specifically, HELCO seeks a commission determination that the reconductored and reinforced 69 kV

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<sup>1</sup>HELCO served a copy of the Application on the DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS, DIVISION OF CONSUMER ADVOCACY ("Consumer Advocate"), an ex officio party to this docket pursuant to HRS § 269-51 and Hawaii Administrative Rules § 6-61-62. HELCO and the Consumer Advocate will be referred to herein as "the Parties."

transmission line for the Project be constructed above the surface of the ground, pursuant to HRS § 269-27.6(a). HELCO also requests that the commission conduct a public hearing, as required by HRS § 269-27.5.<sup>2</sup>

## II.

### Request For Interim Approval

In the Application, HELCO requests interim approval "immediately after the [c]ommission holds the public hearing for the 7300 line project to permit HELCO to commit funds and, if necessary, to start the installation for [the Project] prior to receiving a [c]ommission determination that the reconductored and reinforced 69 kV transmission line be constructed above the surface of the ground pursuant to HRS § 269-27.6(a)."<sup>3</sup> According to HELCO, "[n]ormally, [it] would wait for a [c]ommission decision pursuant to HRS § 269-27.5 and HRS § 269-27.6 before ordering materials or starting construction for a 69 kV overhead line project. However, . . . there is a system need to complete the 7300 Line project as soon as possible."<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>2</sup>In its Application, HELCO states that a public hearing is required under HRS § 269-27.5 because "[t]here are residential homes along State Highway 19 that are in proximity to the proposed 69kV line reconductoring and reinforcement work . . . . Of the 5.4 miles of transmission line in the project area, approximately 2.1 miles pass residentially zoned properties (from approximately P.7 to P30X, P.37X to P.38, and P.42 to P.44X)." Application at 15.

<sup>3</sup>Application at 15-16.

<sup>4</sup>Id.

In support of its request for interim relief, HELCO represents:

1. The Waimea-Keamuku (7200) and Waimea-Ouli (7300) 69kV Transmission Overload Study, Final Report, dated July 2006 (the "Study"), found that "[b]oth the 7200 and 7300 lines are presently at risk for overloads of about 20% of their emergency ratings."<sup>5</sup>

2. "Since both transmission lines are presently at risk for overload conditions, and because the addition of ST-7 at Keahole does not resolve these risks, there are both immediate and long term needs for eliminating the overload risks on the 7200 and 7300 lines."<sup>6</sup>

3. The Study's recommended solution is to reductor both the 7200 and 7300 lines immediately.<sup>7</sup> "Since normal power flow on the 7300 line is approaching the line's continuous rating, priority should be given to completing the 7300 line reductor first."<sup>8</sup>

4. Reductor both the 7200 and 7300 lines "will also allow for increased acceptance of power from the as-available renewable energy resource Hawi Renewable Development ("HRD") and from the firm resource provider Hamakua Energy Partners, L.P. ("HEP")."<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>5</sup>Application at 3

<sup>6</sup>Application at 4.

<sup>7</sup>Application at 4.

<sup>8</sup>Id. at 5.

<sup>9</sup>Application at 6.

5. The long lead time for the Project is due to the fact that it takes a long time to order wood poles. The pole manufacturer informed HELCO that the normal lead time to order wood poles is approximately 16 weeks.<sup>10</sup> The reconductoring and reinforcement of the line is expected to take approximately three months after receipt of the poles.<sup>11</sup> "Receipt of [c]ommission interim approval by late June 2007 will allow HELCO to order the wood poles and complete the 69kV line work by approximately December 2007."<sup>12</sup>

6. HELCO states that it "understands that it is ordering the wood poles and other materials, and possibly starting construction, at its own risk, if the [c]ommission does not approve HELCO's request for the overhead 69kV line reconductoring and reinforcement. HELCO also understands that a [c]ommission interim approval will not affect the [c]ommission's final decision on this project."<sup>13</sup>

7. The Consumer Advocate does not object to the request for interim approval but reserves its right to state its position with respect to HELCO's Application.

By letter dated and filed on June 26, 2007, HELCO notified the commission that since the public hearing will be held on July 30, 2007, "HELCO desires interim approval in late June 2007 prior to the public hearing so that it can order the

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<sup>10</sup>See Application at 16.

<sup>11</sup>Id.

<sup>12</sup>Id.

<sup>13</sup>Id.

poles and materials at that time . . . [which] will allow [HELCO] to stay on schedule and complete construction by approximately December 2007."<sup>14</sup> According to HELCO, the Consumer Advocate does not object to the commission granting interim approval, but reserves the right to state its position on the Application at a later time in the proceeding.

Based on HELCO's representations, the commission finds HELCO's request for interim approval to permit HELCO to commit funds and, if necessary, to start installation for the proposed Project, to be reasonable and in the public interest. Thus, the commission concludes that HELCO's request should be approved. Such approval, however, is conditioned upon HELCO's compliance with all applicable laws, rules and regulations relating to the Project and any other terms, conditions, and requirements imposed subsequent to the commission's and the Consumer Advocate's respective reviews of the merits of HELCO's Application.

### III.

#### Orders

##### THE COMMISSION ORDERS:

1. HELCO's request for interim approval to commit funds to order materials for the Project and, if necessary, to commence construction, is approved.

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<sup>14</sup>See Letter dated and filed on June 26, 2007, from HELCO to the commission.

2. HELCO shall comply with all applicable laws, rules and regulations relating to the Project and any other terms, conditions, and requirements imposed subsequent to the commission's and the Consumer Advocate's respective reviews of the merits of HELCO's Application.

3. In the event the commission ultimately does not approve HELCO's Application on the merits, HELCO shall not seek to recover its share of the costs for the Project from its ratepayers.

DONE at Honolulu, Hawaii JUL 13 2007.

PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION  
OF THE STATE OF HAWAII

By Carlito P. Caliboso  
Carlito P. Caliboso, Chairman

By John E. Cole  
John E. Cole, Commissioner

By Leslie H. Kondo  
Leslie H. Kondo, Commissioner

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

Jodi L. K. Wi  
Jodi L. K. Wi  
Commission Counsel

2007-0124.eh

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I hereby certify that I have this date served a copy of the foregoing Interim Order No. 23544 upon the following parties, by causing a copy hereof to be mailed, postage prepaid, and properly addressed to each such party.

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Counsel for HELCO

  
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Karen Higashi

DATED: JUL 13 2007